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his new book *With Poor Immigrants to America*. To most readers—especially American readers—this volume of sketches, which tells a little of the immigrant in the steerage, a very little about the immigrant after he lands in America, and a great deal about how America impressed an Englishman who tramped from New York to Chicago, will seem far inferior in charm and interest to Mr. Graham's book of last year, *With the Russian Pilgrims to Jerusalem*. Part of the apparent falling-off is due, no doubt, to the nature of the subject-matter in the new book as compared with that of the old. Truly there are few such experiences awaiting an Englishman who speaks Russian like a native and knows the humbler forms of human nature with the knowledge of sympathy, as the journey to Jerusalem in company with a thousand devout Russian pilgrims. Mr. Graham made good use of the opportunity this journey offered. He made his book *With the Russian Pilgrims to Jerusalem* a true interpretation. Into it he put mature and educated feeling, ripened thought. His American sketches, on the contrary, are rather scattering and hasty; they lack, of course, to us, the effect of strangeness which his account of the Russian Pilgrims possessed in an eminent degree; and the interpretations he offers are of a sort that have grown rather familiar to our ears. The voyage in the steerage was brief and rather uneventful; Mr. Graham had no time to enter deeply into the life of New York's East Side; his experiences with the American farmer, with the American housewife, and, rarely, with the recently arrived immigrant, were in the main much like what any one of us would expect to meet with on a long tramp from East to West. One is sorry that the author was not oftener able to exercise his remarkable gift of getting the essence of a man's life-story or character out of him, and making it as interesting to the reader as fiction. He makes some discoveries, of course, and now and then he speaks from his heart in a way that is telling. "One thing I noted in America," he writes: "that the blossom of religion seems to have been pressed between Bible leaves, withered and dried long ago. What is called religion is a sort of ethical rampage. . . . Far from fearing God, preachers announce from their pulpits that they are 'working with Him,' or 'co-operating with the inevitable tendencies of the world,' or 'hastening on the work of evolution.' For my part, I believe that it is my sacred due to my brother that he be given an opportunity of facing this world, the mystery of its beauty and of his life upon it, that he find out God for himself and learn to pray to Him. But that is at once Eastern and personal." The tone of this confession of faith is grateful. On the whole, however, the author's contrast of East and West, of Russia and America, is of a somewhat obvious sort. We have been a good deal written about by foreigners other than Mr. Graham; and Mr. Graham, in his very readable and even enjoyable book, has written about us, as the others have done, well.

A FAR JOURNEY. By ABRAHAM MITRÉ RIHBANY. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914.

Perhaps no other class of immigrants make a greater change of environment in coming to live in the United States than do the Syrians. Their own land differs wholly from ours; it is a land of little things and of primitive ways in most matters. Arabic, the language the Syrian speaks, is so radically different from English as to make thinking in the words of our

tongue a far more difficult task for him than it is for the man of Teuton or Latin race. Even the mistakes of pronunciation which the Syrian makes are of a sort more likely to render his speech unintelligible than are the corresponding errors of the German, Frenchman, or Italian who is learning to speak English. Yet the Syrian is "assimilable" in a high degree; he is by nature kindly; he is often commercially capable; moreover, he has ideals of civilization and even of scholarship, and is inclined to be intellectually ambitious. It is worth noting that learning among the Syrians is held in some reverence and the poet is not scorned.

Mr. Abraham Mitrie Rihbany gives us, in the beginning of his autobiography, pictures of Syrian village life and society which enable us to understand the violence of the contrast, as he felt it, between New York City and his old home near Beyrout. The author tells of the fierce contentions between rival clans in his birthplace—contentions, however, which seldom resulted in the death of any combatant—and he makes us feel the fascination that clannishness certainly exercises upon the human spirit, whether in Kentucky or Syria. He tells us amusingly, but not contemptuously, of how his father strove to rid himself of a row of magnificent oaks which stood close to his land, shadowing his mulberry-trees and drawing their nutriment from his soil. The elder Rihbany tried prayer, and was willing to try magic, but he would not, as he was advised to do, resort to poison. It was all crude enough, but pleasant enough, too; the life, we gather, was sufficiently spacious for a boy, though it soon became too narrow as the boy approached manhood.

Mr. Rihbany is a man whose life has been such as to enable him to moralize now and then with good effect, and we listen to his occasional reflections upon life with more respect than we do to most utterances of this kind. Looking back upon his boyhood, he writes: "I realize most clearly how limited, how meagerly inventive, is love without culture; how almost helpless is sympathy without knowledge. Love is, indeed, 'the greatest thing in the world'; but without knowledge, acquired knowledge—real culture—love is like a skilled workman without his tools, a mariner without his chart and compass."

This, no doubt, is one of those commonplace truths which only one speaking from experience can make us heed. The author's whole life, his struggle for advantages that many of us possess and hold lightly, shows the value of even a little education; and it shows, too, how even under adverse circumstances, enlightenment, thought, the habit of thinking freely and truly, does its work. Mr. Rihbany was expected to be a stone mason like his father, and toiled at this trade; but the thought of endless manual labor stifled him, and he insisted upon getting an education. He entered the American boarding-school at Sûk-el-Gharb, and soon his religious views underwent a transformation; the Bible, which he now read and studied for the first time, affected him as strongly as it did Englishmen when it was first given to them in English. The result was that he discarded the teachings of the Greek Orthodox Church, in which he had been reared, and became a Protestant. This turning from the old faith to the new seems to have been rather a matter of gradual conviction than of emotional experience; it was one of those quiet alterations of the mind that may matter as much to the soul as do stormier changes.

For several years Mr. Rihbany was a teacher in a Syrian school. Then, at last, he took his great resolve and went to America. For a time he was

editor of a Syrian newspaper in New York City. Later, he became a lecturer and drifted from place to place, often penniless and disheartened. But after long waiting and at least one cruel disappointment, he obtained what he most wanted, a college education, studying as a special student at Ohio Wesleyan. After leaving college he became for a brief period a political speaker; but his goal was the ministry, and when the political campaign of 1896 was over he accepted the invitation of the Congregationalists of Morenci, Michigan, to become their pastor. His life-story is an unusual one, and it reveals a sufficient depth of thought and character to give it somewhat more than the interest of novelty.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE. By W. T. YOUNG, M.A. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1914.

"This little book," says its author, "attempts to advance a step toward the ideal of a History of Literature which may be used without being abused; in other words, which may be accepted as a guide to deeper and wider reading, not as a short-cut to a superficial and specious knowledge of the classics of our language." The treatise is scholarly and evidently inspired by a vital interest in English literature. The only question that arises in connection with it is whether it does not go somewhat far in the direction indicated in the passage quoted from the preface. Extreme economy of space—the book contains but little over two hundred pages of text—augments the difficulty encountered in all such manuals—the difficulty of adjusting the claims of closely crowding facts with those of illuminating comment and description. As to the descriptive part of Professor Young's work, one finds it something of a fault that the general characterizations are seldom such as to convey very definite ideas to readers not already pretty familiar with the works described. Nothing, of course, could be worse than "specious," second-hand knowledge in place of real, first-hand knowledge; yet there is room for such a gift of graphic, if somewhat hyperbolic, characterization as was possessed by Lowell, and for the humane persuasiveness of an Andrew Lang. In dealing with the facts the author has shunned a rigid, text-book style, and adopted that of a rather condensed lecture. Facts of little more than tabular significance are woven into fluent sentences, and it is doubtful whether the gain in apparent grace and coherence compensates for a kind of smooth impenetrability to intellectual grasp which such a treatment presents. Professor Young's work is in its way zestful, and it is far from pedantic. It is possible to conceive of a book both more stimulating and better adapted to thorough, detailed study.